



**BILLING CODE: 4910-81-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**Maritime Administration**

**[Docket No. MARAD-2019-0094]**

**Deepwater Port License Application: Bluewater Texas Terminal LLC (Bluewater)**

**AGENCY:** Maritime Administration, Department of Transportation.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent; notice of public meeting; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), in coordination with the Maritime Administration (MARAD), will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) as part of the environmental review of the Bluewater Texas Terminal LLC (Bluewater) Deepwater Port License Application. The application proposes the ownership, construction, operation and eventual decommissioning of an offshore oil export deepwater port that would be located in Federal waters approximately 15 nautical miles off the coast of San Patricio County, Texas in a water depth of approximately 89 feet. The deepwater port would allow for the loading of Very Large Crude Carriers (VLCCs) and other sized crude oil cargo carriers via a single point mooring buoy system.

This Notice of Intent (NOI) requests public participation in the scoping process, provides information on how to participate, and announces an informational open house and public meeting in Corpus Christi, Texas. Pursuant to the criteria provided in the Deepwater Port Act of 1974, as amended (the Act), Texas is the designated Adjacent Coastal State for this application.

**DATES:** There will be one public scoping meeting held in connection with the Bluewater Deepwater Port License Application. The meeting will be held in Corpus

Christi, Texas, on Monday, July 22, 2019, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The public meeting will be preceded by an informational open house from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The public meeting may end later than the stated time, depending on the number of persons wishing to speak. Additionally, materials submitted in response to this request for comments on the Bluewater application must reach the Federal Docket Management Facility as detailed below by Wednesday, July 31, 2019.

**ADDRESSES:** The open house and public meeting in Corpus Christi, Texas will be held at the Omni Corpus Christi Hotel, 900 N. Shoreline Boulevard, Corpus Christi, Texas, 78401, phone: (361) 887-1600, web address: <https://www.omnihotels.com/hotels/corpus-christi>. Parking is available at the venue.

The public docket for the Bluewater Deepwater Port License Application is maintained by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Management Facility, West Building, Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590. The license application is available for viewing at the Regulations.gov website: <http://www.regulations.gov> under docket number MARAD-2019-0094.

We encourage you to submit comments electronically through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>. If you submit your comments electronically, it is not necessary to also submit a hard copy. If you cannot submit material using <http://www.regulations.gov>, please contact either Mr. Roddy Bachman, USCG, or Ms. Yvette M. Fields, MARAD, as listed in the following “FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT” section of this document, which also provides alternate instructions for submitting written comments. Additionally, if you go to the online

docket and sign up for email alerts, you will be notified when comments are posted.

Anonymous comments will be accepted. All comments received will be posted without change to <http://www.regulations.gov> and will include any personal information you have provided. The Federal Docket Management Facility's telephone number is 202-366-9317 or 202-366-9826, the fax number is 202-493-2251.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Roddy Bachman, USCG, telephone: 202-372-1451, email: *Roddy.C.Bachman@uscg.mil* , or Ms. Yvette M. Fields, MARAD, telephone: 202-366-0926, email: *Yvette.Fields@dot.gov*. For questions regarding viewing the Docket, call Docket Operations, telephone: 202-366-9317 or 202-366-9826.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

##### **Public Meeting and Open House**

We encourage you to attend the informational open house and public meeting to learn about, and comment on, the proposed deepwater port. You will have the opportunity to submit comments on the scope and significance of the issues related to the proposed deepwater port that should be addressed in the EIS.

Speaker registrations will be available at the door. Speakers at the public scoping meeting will be recognized in the following order: elected officials, public agencies, individuals or groups in the sign-up order and then anyone else who wishes to speak.

In order to allow everyone a chance to speak at a public meeting, we may limit speaker time, extend the meeting hours, or both. You must identify yourself, and any organization you represent by name. Your remarks will be recorded and/or transcribed for inclusion in the public docket.

You may submit written material at the public meeting, either in place of, or in addition to, speaking. Written material should include your name and address and will be included in the public docket.

Public docket materials will be made available to the public on the Federal Docket Management Facility website (see ADDRESSES).

Our public meeting location is wheelchair-accessible and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you plan to attend the open house or public meeting and need special assistance such as sign language interpretation, non-English language translator services or other reasonable accommodation, please notify the USCG or MARAD (see FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT) at least 5 business days in advance of the public meeting. Include your contact information as well as information about your specific needs.

### **Request for Comments**

We request public comment on this proposal. The comments may relate to, but are not limited to, the environmental impact of the proposed action. All comments will be accepted. The public meeting is not the only opportunity you have to comment on the Bluewater Deepwater Port License Application. In addition to, or in place of, attending a meeting, you may submit comments directly to the Federal Docket Management Facility during the public comment period (see Dates). We will consider all comments and material received during the 30-day scoping period.

The license application, comments and associated documentation, as well as the draft and final EISs (when published), are available for viewing at the Federal Docket Management System (FDMS) website: <http://www.regulations.gov> under docket number

MARAD-2019-0094.

Public comment submissions should include:

- Docket number MARAD-2019-0094.
- Your name and address.

Submit comments or material using only one of the following methods:

- Electronically (preferred for processing) to the Federal Docket Management System (FDMS) website: *<http://www.regulations.gov>* under docket number MARAD-2019-0094.
- By mail to the Federal Docket Management Facility (MARAD-2019-0094), U.S. Department of Transportation, West Building, Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590-0001.
- By personal delivery to the room and address listed above between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.
- By fax to the Federal Docket Management Facility at 202-493-2251.

Faxed, mailed or hand delivered submissions must be unbound, no larger than 8½ by 11 inches and suitable for copying and electronic scanning. The format of electronic submissions should also be no larger than 8½ by 11 inches. If you mail your submission and want to know when it reaches the Federal Docket Management Facility, please include a stamped, self-addressed postcard or envelope.

Regardless of the method used for submitting comments, all submissions will be posted, without change, to the FDMS website (<http://www.regulations.gov>) and will include any personal information you provide. Therefore, submitting this information to

the docket makes it public. You may wish to read the Privacy and Use Notice that is available on the FDMS website and the Department of Transportation Privacy Act Notice that appeared in the **Federal Register** on April 11, 2000 (65 FR 19477), see Privacy Act. You may view docket submissions at the Federal Docket Management Facility or electronically on the FDMS website.

## **Background**

Information about deepwater ports, the statutes, and regulations governing their licensing, including the application review process, and the receipt of the current application for the proposed Bluewater deepwater port appears in the Bluewater Notice of Application, Wednesday, June 26, 2019 edition of the **Federal Register** (84 FR 30301). The “Summary of the Application” from that publication is reprinted below for your convenience.

Consideration of a deepwater port license application includes review of the proposed deepwater port’s impact on the natural and human environment. For the proposed deepwater port, USCG and MARAD are the co-lead Federal agencies for determining the scope of this review, and in this case, it has been determined that review must include preparation of an EIS. This NOI is required by 40 CFR 1501.7. It briefly describes the proposed action, possible alternatives and our proposed scoping process. You can address any questions about the proposed action, the scoping process or the EIS to the USCG or MARAD project managers identified in this notice (see FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT).

## **Proposed Action and Alternatives**

The proposed action requiring environmental review is the Federal licensing of the proposed deepwater port described in “Summary of the Application” below. The alternatives to licensing the proposed port are: (1) licensing with conditions (including conditions designed to mitigate environmental impact), (2) evaluation of deepwater port and onshore site/pipeline route alternatives or (3) denying the application, which for purposes of environmental review is the “no-action” alternative.

### **Scoping Process**

Public scoping is an early and open process for identifying and determining the scope of issues to be addressed in the EIS. Scoping begins with this notice, continues through the public comment period (see Dates), and ends when USCG and MARAD have completed the following actions:

- Invites the participation of Federal, state, and local agencies, any affected Indian tribe, the applicant, in this case Bluewater, and other interested persons;
- Determines the actions, alternatives and impacts described in 40 CFR 1508.25;
- Identifies and eliminates from detailed study, those issues that are not significant or that have been covered elsewhere;
- Identifies other relevant permitting, environmental review and consultation requirements;
- Indicates the relationship between timing of the environmental review and other aspects of the application process; and
- At its discretion, exercises the options provided in 40 CFR 1501.7(b).

Once the scoping process is complete, USCG and MARAD will prepare a draft EIS. When complete, MARAD will publish a **Federal Register** notice announcing

public availability of the Draft EIS. (If you want that notice to be sent to you, please contact the USCG or MARAD project manager identified in FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT). You will have an opportunity to review and comment on the Draft EIS. The USCG, MARAD and other appropriate cooperating agencies will consider the received comments and then prepare the Final EIS. As with the Draft EIS, we will announce the availability of the Final EIS and give you an opportunity for review and comment. The Act requires a final public hearing to be held in the Adjacent Coastal State. Its purpose is to receive comments on matters related to whether or not an operating license should be issued. The final public hearing will be held after the Final EIS is made available for public review and comment.

### **Summary of the Application**

Bluewater is proposing to construct, own, and operate a deepwater port terminal in the Gulf of Mexico (GOM) to export domestically produced crude oil. The proposed project involves the design, engineering, and construction of a deepwater port, approximately 56.48 miles of pipeline infrastructure, and a booster station. The Bluewater deepwater port would allow for up to two (2) very large crude carriers (VLCCs) or other crude oil carriers to moor at single point mooring (SPM) buoys and connect with the deepwater port via floating connecting crude oil hoses. During single vessel loading operations, the proposed project is capable of loading rates of up to approximately 80,000 barrels per hour (bph) and during simultaneous vessel loading operations, the proposed project is capable of loading rates of 40,000 bph. The facility is expected to service 16 Very Large Crude Carriers (VLCCs) per month.

For the purposes of this application, the proposed Bluewater project is described



in three distinguishable segments by locality, to include the onshore components, the inshore components and the offshore components.

Onshore components associated with the proposed Bluewater project are defined as those components on the landward side of the western Redfish Bay Mean High Tide (MHT) line, located in San Patricio and Aransas Counties, Texas. The onshore project components include:

- Approximately 22.20 miles of two (2) new parallel 30-inch-diameter crude oil pipelines extending from a planned multi-use terminal located south of the City of Taft in San Patricio County, Texas. The planned multi-use terminal will consist of multiple inbound and outbound crude oil pipelines. Two of those outbound pipelines compose the proposed pipeline infrastructure that will extend to the inshore pipeline which connects to the proposed Harbor Island Booster Station (Booster Station) described below.

Inshore components associated with the proposed Bluewater project are defined as those components located between the western Redfish Bay MHT line and the MHT line located at the interface of San Jose Island and the GOM. Inshore project components include:

- Approximately 7.15 miles of two (2) new 30-inch-diameter crude oil pipelines connecting to the onshore facility, an approximately 19-acre booster station and a connection to the offshore pipeline. The onshore pipeline would be located within San Patricio County, Texas and Nueces County, Texas and the Booster Station would be located on Harbor Island in

Nueces County, Texas.

- The Booster Station will include approximately 19 acres of land with two (2) aboveground crude oil storage tanks, each with a total storage capacity of 181,000 barrels and two (2) 181,000-barrel water storage tanks. The purpose of water tanks is to allow for the clearing of the pipeline infrastructure. During clearing operations, water from the water storage tanks would be pumped through the pipelines and back to the Booster Station. The displaced crude oil would be placed in the two crude oil storage tanks.
- Additionally, the Booster Station will contain equipment and piping to provide interconnectivity with the crude oil supply network for the Bluewater project. This would include the installation of four (4) 5,500 horsepower electrically powered motors in a series electronically locked into operation as two booster pumping systems delivering approximately 11,000 horsepower to each of the two (2) 30-inch diameter pipelines. Further, the Booster Station would house the necessary infrastructure to support the transport of crude oil through the proposed pipeline infrastructure to the deepwater port for the loading of moored vessels to include a fire water tank, firewater pumps, stormwater runoff treatment plant and pumps, emergency generator, foam and water monitors and an operations office.

Offshore components associated with the proposed Bluewater project are defined as those components located seaward of the MHT line located at the interface of San Jose Island and the GOM. The offshore project components include:

- Approximately 27.13 miles of two (2) new 30-inch-diameter crude oil pipelines extending from the shoreline crossing at the interface of San Jose Island to the offshore Bluewater deepwater port for crude oil delivery to Single Point Mooring (SPM) buoys.
- Two (2) SPMs in Outer Continental Shelf Matagorda Island Area TX4 lease blocks 698 and 699, approximately 15 nautical miles (17.26 statute miles) off the coast of San Patricio County, Texas in a water depth of approximately 89 feet.
- A catenary anchor leg mooring (CALM) system for each SPM buoy connected to a pipeline end manifold (PLEM) system, mooring hawsers, floating hoses, and sub-marine hoses to allow for the loading of crude oil to vessels moored at the proposed deepwater port. The SPM buoy system will be permanently moored with a symmetrically arranged six-leg anchor dual chain configuration extending to twelve (12) 72-inch-diameter pile anchors installed on the seafloor.
- Each of the proposed SPM buoy systems will consist of inner and outer cylindrical shells subdivided into twelve equal-sized watertight radial compartments. A rotating table will be affixed to the SPM buoy and allow for the connection of moored vessels to the SPM buoy system via mooring hawsers. Two floating hoses equipped with marine break-away couplings will be utilized for the transfer of crude oil from the SPM buoy systems to the moored vessel. Floating hoses will be equipped with strobe lights at 15-foot intervals for detection at night and low-light conditions.

## **Privacy Act**

The electronic form of all comments received into the FDMS can be searched by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). The Department of Transportation Privacy Act Statement can be viewed in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (Volume 65, Number 70, pages 19477-78) or by visiting <http://www.regulations.gov>.

(Authority: 33 U.S.C. 1501, et seq.; 49 CFR 1.93(h))

Dated: June 27, 2019.

By Order of the Maritime Administrator.

**T. Mitchell Hudson, Jr.**

*Secretary, Maritime Administration.*